

# Cure or quack?

Look around. Someone in your dining hall, your class or slipping on the sidewalk is going to die of cancer.

That someone could be you. Right now there is no known cure for cancer, only medicines and treatments to arrest it or ease the pain.

And one method that might help is now illegal in 43 states — laetrile.

Laetrile has been banned by the Food and Drug Administration on the grounds that it might be a quack cure, a last chance drug. It is made from apricot pits and has been proposed not as a cure for cancer, but as a drug to ease pain and possibly prolong life.

And the FDA has banned it without enough research because it's afraid people who

are dying and desperate will use the drug without first considering its effects, good and bad, and whether it will help or not.

Little research has been done on the drug. What has been done has been contradictory, some studies saying it works on their mice while others say it doesn't help theirs at all. So the FDA decided to make up peoples' minds for them.

No one gets laetrile. Studies have shown that laetrile, while it may not help, certainly can't hurt.

But the FDA has decided that people who are under stress won't be able to rationally weigh the information about using the drug and will make a decision when all else

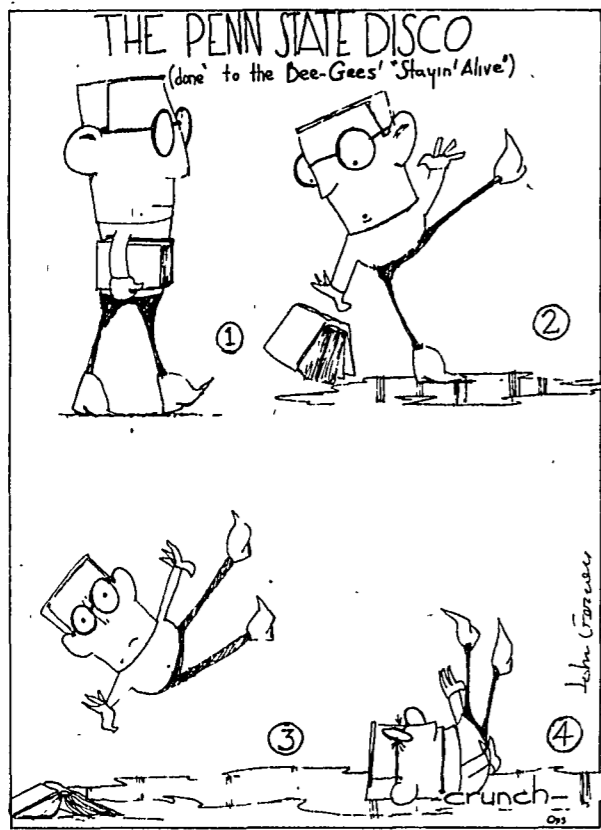
fails, or without trying other methods.

The FDA should do more research before condemning laetrile as a phony. Maybe laetrile won't be any good, but it shouldn't be discarded as a possibility without sufficient evidence.

People should also be allowed to make up their own minds with the advice of their doctors and other professionals. Other methods used to treat cancer are not cures either, and should not be viewed as such.

Wherever the FDA finally stands on laetrile, it should be based on extensive research with solid conclusions, not contradictory reports.

See related story, page 1.



# Great expectations, huge failures

Parents, whether they ever say it or not, expect certain things from their children. In fact, they usually expect quite a bit and are rarely satisfied. If a child fulfills his parents' dreams and becomes a lawyer, they wonder why he didn't become a doctor; and even if the child does become a doctor, the parents still aren't happy.

"Hell, Mama..."  
"Hello, who's this?"  
"It's your son, Jonas, Mama. I've just discovered a cure for polio!"  
"That's nice dear, did you find a job yet?"

"I have a job, Mama, I have a research grant."

"That's no job for a fine young doctor like you. After we spent all of that money for school, why don't you open an office and become rich, and play golf on Wednesday? Why don't you settle down and do something worthwhile?"

"But I am doing something worthwhile, I've found a vaccine for polio. Millions of kids will be free from suffering!"

"So, why don't you find a cure for cancer? Or the common cold? I've had this cough for the past three days and..."

Often parents never voice their desires, but are just as disappointed when the wishes aren't fulfilled.

James McNeill Whistler has just returned from his successful exhibition in Paris in 1855.



"Father, I'm home."  
"James, welcome home. Have you come back to get a job?"

"No, Father, they loved my work in Paris. I'm going to London."

"It'll break your mother's heart..."

"But I've gone away before..."

"Not your leaving, your not getting a job or an education."

"But I'll be rich and famous."

"Will you be a doctor?"

"No, but..."

"If you only knew how your mother wanted her son to be a doctor. Such talented hands going to waste drawing pictures. Didn't you get enough of that in kindergarten?"

"Father, how was I to know she wanted me to be a doctor? I thought she wanted me to be the best at whatever I could. They loved my work at the exhibition!"

"You know Mrs. Harding? Her son went to Harvard and then became a doctor. He has four carriages and 12 horses. He bought his mother a piano for Christmas."

"I'll make it up to Mother, I'll paint her picture."

"It's no use, son, she probably won't even be able to smile or look at you while you paint it. It's not too late, you could still become a doctor."

So, some people play the game and try

to live up to their parents' expectations, or at least what they perceive them to be. Others ignore their parents completely and do what they want with their lives.

This summer I was discussing with some of my co-workers this dilemma. Some of them were in law school, against their wishes.

"I don't know why I am going to law school," one of them complained. "My parents won't be happy now unless I graduate first in the class and go on to be another F. Lee Bailey."

"That's true," another co-worker agreed. "I don't think there's anything anyone could do that would make their parents happy."

"That's not true," I said. "I know what I could do that would please my parents and make them accept me completely."

"What's that?" they asked in a chorus of amazement.

"Fight in World War II."

Walt Meyer is an eighth-term advertising major.

# Letters to the Editor

## Letter defended

Re my earlier letter (Jan. 24), the quick response of one Tim Miller shows me little real thoughtfulness. The letter was designed to be provocative, but what I was looking for was not the shallow indignation of some male, who in any event is no more qualified than I to "understand" the female reaction to heterosexual rape.

"The hole," as I so glibly called it, is an expression I borrowed from Jean-Paul Sartre ("Being and Nothingness"). I had hoped that any educated person would have recognized the direction I was pointing in, toward the ontological or existential nature of the problem.

To say flatly that their sexuality is not a device women use against men strikes me as incredibly naive. (Please remember that my statements are, by design, a generalization, and I hope we all know what a generalization is worth.) If this were not recognizable so, the plot of Aristophanes' "Lysistrata," for one example, would fall flat on its face. I do not know if Miller is the average middle-class student who has lived a reasonably comfortable and sheltered life, but he might have a different opinion if he had had to live in a run-down, lower-class red-light district or frequent the seedy establishments to be found therein.

I also question not only Miller's "understanding" of rape, but his "understanding" of the "violation" I have described. From his remarks, I rather doubt that he has ever been beaten or "damaged" badly enough to appreciate this kind of trauma.

Finally, let me briefly remark on the absurdity of equating castration with rape. Rape is, as I quoted Brownmiller to say, the taking of sex; not a person's sexual organs. The damage by castration is certainly more permanent physically, and hence, it would be logical to assume, psychologically.

Douglas P. Micklo  
graduate-comparative literature  
Jan. 25

## Rape victim

I would like to respond to Mr. Micklo's letter concerning rape. I too am a rape victim. At the age of 10, I was raped by six teenagers while I was walking home from school. I got off easy as far as gang rapes go. I didn't have broken bottles rammed in my vagina, I didn't have words carved into my chest, and I wasn't mutilated. They left me alongside a street bleeding and beaten.

What did I feel? Shame. Revulsion, guilt, rage, hatred and fear. What had I done to deserve that? What has a 10-year-old to do with the war between the sexes? For that matter, what does the war between the sexes have to do with rape?

Rape is not a sexual crime; it is violent. The intent of rape is not to steal sexual favors from a woman, but to destroy her. Rape does not only happen to women; it happens to men and children too. As a matter of fact, 50 percent of all rapes happen to young people 18 and under.

Increasingly, rape-murder and gang rape are on the rise. How can you compare rape and robbery? Money can be replaced. Life can't.

Mr. Micklo, can you appreciate the trauma a child would experience? A man? Why not a woman? Rape is the victimization of people by other people. Hopefully you will be able to sympathize with a rape victim because he/she is a person and not because of their sex.

name withheld upon request

## Middle ground

I believe Robert Hill represents a narrow (but dedicated and vociferous) minority when he speaks in support of affirmative action for the socialists (Jan. 23). It is incomprehensible to me that anyone who once braved burning crosses on the lawn or physical harassment from police in Jackson or Selma in the name of ending racial discrimination could 10 years later condone it in another form.

I can't believe the brilliant and inspirational civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King lived and died the way he did simply to replace one form of discrimination with another.

The Alan Bakke case may not be the best to decide the future of the equal rights movement in America. I don't think a Supreme Court ruling in his favor would put the movement back to square one. Alan Bakke was rejected by Davis Medical School because he was caucasian. Some argue this was justified because his place was being reserved for a less fortunate (perhaps less qualified) student in the highly competitive medical school. If that is the case, then the problem is not with the skin pigments of our nation's law and medical students, but rather with the powerful lobbies who succeed in restricting the number of places in the classroom. That is where the change is needed, and it can be accomplished without regard to race, color or creed.

On the subject of conservatism vs. liberalism (Jan. 24), the conservative position is not one of fear. From my observations, the conservatives say the nation has been plunged into ill-conceived and administered programs by well-intentioned liberals too many times. They have seen failure, and damage done to the groups who were supposed to be helped. So the conservative watchword would better be described as "caution." Perhaps the old adage of "A liberal gives a starving man a fish, a Conservative teaches the starving man how to fish," best describes the difference.

The greatest failure is not shutting one extreme position in favor of another; it is the failure to strive for the middle ground, which always seems to work out best.

Brian Golden  
6th-broadcast journalism

## Gross ignorance

Bravo Tim Miller! Thank you for your sentiments Jan. 25. Mr. Micklo (Jan. 24) accused women of using their anatomy "as a bargaining commodity meal-ticket, and or main weapon in the female arsenal in the war between the sexes." It is this kind of callousness which has enabled men to think of women as property or natural targets of rape without worrying about the finer, more delicate association of flesh and humanity.

A woman could have written your rebuttal (and here I assume from your name that you aren't). Through your sensitivity you illuminated a prevalent example of gross ignorance and brought out the key issue of rape.

Judy Finestone  
8th-speech pathology and audiology  
Jan. 25

## It's your turn

The Daily Collegian will be running an Opinion-Editorial page on the University Task Force Feb. 9. Opinions on the Task Force are welcomed and should be brought to the Collegian office (126 Carnegie Building) by this Friday.

# the Collegian

Jeffrey Hawkes  
Editor

Scott R. Sesler  
Business Manager

### Letters policy

The Daily Collegian encourages comments on news coverage, editorial policy and campus and off-campus affairs. Letters should be typewritten, double spaced, signed by no more than two persons and not longer than 30 lines. Students' letters should include the name, term and major of the writer. The editorial editor reserves the right to edit letters, and to reject them if they are libelous or do not conform to standards of good taste.

## Short circuits blow fuses over song

It is time for the small people of this world to stand up and be noticed. In this regard, we feel it is about time for the small people of Penn State to unite, so to speak.

So it has become necessary to form the Penn State chapter of the S.P.C.S.P. (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Short Persons). A splinter group may be formed, namely the S.P.L.A. Yes, the Short Peoples Liberation Army.

The S.P.L.A., the enforcement arm of the S.P.C.S.P., will work for the following goals:

- Help short people reach new heights,
- Lower basketball hoops to six feet,
- Lower the handrails on the loop buses,
- Mandatory exile for anyone over six feet,
- Convert all golf courses to miniature courses.

All those interested in furthering these noble pursuits are welcome to join the S.P.C.S.P., provided you are 5 feet 6 in. tall or less. Our first meeting will be held in the janitor's closet on the first floor Hammond. And remember our battle cry: "Good things come in small packages."

Gary Seidenstricker (5ft., 6in.)  
8th-electrical engineering  
Tom Hinz (5ft., 6in.)  
8th-electrical engineering



Illustration by Dalia Hoke

In reply to Charles Mazzitti's letter of Jan. 23, you, my friend, are burning on a short fuse. Has it never occurred to you that tall people have problems too? I don't suppose you've ever had the rather painful experience of hitting your head on low ceilings or hanging lights, and I doubt you have any trouble getting into or out of the back seat of a Volkswagen.

You've obviously missed the joys of buying clothes with a 32" waist and a 36" inseam: The choices of style are just a little limited. Of course, there's always the great thrill of riding on a bus where if you sit your knees are jammed in your face, and if you stand you have to hunch over because the ceiling is two inches too short.

And everyone knows that tall people are clumsy, what with those great long arms and legs getting in the way of everything.

If the problems of short people have been overlooked, then those of tall people have been overlooked. It is in the nature of our society to cause problems for those who differ greatly from the average, it being easier and cheaper to tailor as much as possible to the norm.

If you want real problems, Mr. Mazzitti, try being left handed for a while. No one is consciously out to get you because you are short.

As for Randy Newman, his song is about prejudice and what a stupid thing it really is. But I guess you were too shortsighted to see that.

Jim Howard (6ft., 3in.)  
11th-ceramic science  
Jan. 26

This is in response to Charles Mazzitti's "short letter" of Jan. 23. You're right — enough is enough. Enough bickering and complaining about discrimination against short people. Of course being short has its drawbacks. I know, I'm only 5ft., 2in.

But being short also has its advantages. It's easier to get into racquetball courts, more comfortable to ride in compact cars, and easier to hide behind the person in front of you in class when you don't want to answer a question.

I have enough self-esteem to be able to laugh at myself, to listen to short people jokes and chuckle right along with all those six-footers. I think you should do too.

Bobbi Jo McNeillie  
2nd-liberal arts

I read the letter about short people in Friday's paper, and have one conclusion: Charles Mazzitti needs help. In his letter he states that the staff of the Collegian is biased against short people. He also implies that the rest of the world is also prejudiced.

It is hard to see how he arrives at these conclusions based on one minor reference. The author of the weather report was obviously trying to add some humor to a dreary weather report. Being that almost all other news in the world today is bad news, I think this is very admirable.

If you cannot handle the statement for what it is, I suggest you carefully examine your outlook on life. You obviously have a persecution complex. Maybe it's time you saw a psychiatrist. If all else fails, try platform shoes.

Paul Morris (5ft., 6in.)  
2nd-architectural engineering

Charles Mazzitti: Undoubtedly your physical stature or lack thereof would be less clearly evident were it not for the head-in-the-sand posture in which you situate yourself.

In the Randy Newman song to which you alluded, the one which precipitated this nationwide disquietude among the less tall, there is a line saying "Short people are just the same as you and I, (a fool such as I), All men are brothers until the day they die, (it's a wonderful world)."

Might I suggest that other adjectives could equally well be substituted for short. A partial list could include, but not be limited to, gay, female, neuter, black, yellow, red, brown, green, orange and purple, developmentally disabled, physically handicapped, athletic, greek, dorm, town, artistic, musical, younger, older, alcoholic, teetotaling, atheistic, agnostic, religious (of whatever persuasion), etc.

Yours, and this forum makes it obvious you are not alone, is clearly a case of not being able to see the forest for the trees.

Thomas E. Little  
(6ft., 2in. eyes of blue; WASP, male)  
12th-community development